

## REMARKS

The present remarks are in response to the Office Action entered in the above-identified case and mailed on January 16, 2004. Claims 1, 4-7, 10-13, 16-19 and 22-24 are pending in the application. Claims 4, 10, 16 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,261,041 to Susman. Claims 1, 5-7, 11-13, 17-19 and 23-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 also over Susman. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Because both the rejections under §102(b) and §103 relate to the same individual prior art reference, both rejections will be dealt with simultaneously. The claims in the pending application as they presently stand include features which are not disclosed, taught or suggested in the prior art, and therefore should be allowed.

The present application relates to a communication function between graphic objects such as an application object and an avatar. The claims call for among other things, a sensing area or a sensing area setting means. The sensing area defines an area around an object. The object is then able to sense information regarding other objects which are located within the object's sensing area. The objects further include a transmission area or transmission area setting means. The transmission areas defines a second area around the object. The object is then able to transmit information to other objects which are located within the first object's transmission area. One of the sensing area and the transmission area is larger than the other of the sensing area and the transmission area. The practical effect of this requirement is that the object will be able to transfer information to other objects even when such other objects are located beyond the distance that the first object can detect their presence. Alternatively, the first object may be able to sense objects that are a distance away, but which are too far away for the first object to communicate information to, because they are outside the first object's transmission area. Susman does not teach this feature.

According to the Examiner the physical volume of an object, such as the matchstick shown in Fig. 7, teaches a "sensing area setting means for setting a sensing area to sense information on one or more sensed objects within the sensing area." However, this simply is not the case. The physical dimensions of the object (matchstick) have nothing to do with sensing other objects in an area surrounding the matchstick. According to Susman the physical

dimensions of the object are used to define mechanical interactions (collisions) between the object and other objects. Susman teaches and suggests nothing regarding the ability of an object to transmit information to other objects which are at distances greater than that which the first object is able to perceive them, or the ability to perceive objects at a distance greater than that in which the first object can transmit information to the distant objects.

Accordingly, since Susman does not disclose teach or suggest this feature of the claimed invention the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 103 are improper and should be withdrawn.

For these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims as presently amended are all in condition for allowance. Applicant therefore requests that the Examiner allow the claims move the application to issue. However, if there are any remaining issues the Examiner is encouraged to call Applicants' attorney, Jeffrey H. Canfield at (312) 807-4233 in order to facilitate a speedy disposition of the present case.

If any additional fees are required in connection with this response they may be charged to deposit account no. 02-1818.

Respectfully submitted,

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